UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
MARINE CORPS CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS SCHOOL
WEAPONS TRAINING BATTALION
TRAINING COMMAND
2300 LOUIS ROAD (C478)
QUANTICO, VIRGINIA 22134-5036

STUDENT OUTLINE

CMO SUPPORT TO PROBLEM FRAMING

CAC-PLAN-209

CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS PLANNER COURSE

M020AQD

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LEARNING OBJECTIVES

a. **TERMINAL LEARNING OBJECTIVE**. Given a mission, commander's intent, CPB planning support products and as a member of a Civil-Military Operations Working Group, integrate Civil-Military considerations into the planning process, to support the commander's decision making by providing an understanding of the civil environment and the nature of the problem in order to identify an appropriate solution, in accordance with MCWP 3-33.1. (CAC-PLAN-2001)

b. **ENABLING LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

(1) Without the aid of references, define the purpose of the problem framing step, in accordance with the MCWP 5-1, Ch 2. (CAC-PLAN-2001g)

(2) Without the aid of references, identify problem framing injects, in accordance with the MCWP 5-1, Ch 2. (CAC-PLAN-2001h)

(3) Without the aid of references, identify problem framing activities, in accordance with the MCWP 5-1, Ch 2. (CAC-PLAN-2001i)

(4) Without the aid of references, identify problem framing results, in accordance with the MCWP 5-1, Ch 2. (CAC-PLAN-2001j)

1. **INTRODUCTION TO PROBLEM FRAMING**

   a. **What is Problem Framing?** MCWP 5-1 defines the purpose
of Problem Framing as: "To gain an enhanced understanding of the
environment and the nature of the problem. This understanding
allows a Commander to visualize the operation and describe his
conceptual approach of what the command must accomplish, when,
where it must be done, and most importantly, why (the purpose of
the operation)." The nature of the problem is essential to the
planning process. What does this mean exactly? Understanding
the operational environment and identifying the root cause of
the problem indicated by HHQ. If the assessment is inadequate;
everything done in subsequent steps may not solve the problem.

   b. **Problem Framing Injects**. Commanders often begin
planning in response to specific guidance and direction from
HHQ. Accordingly, an order or direction including the mission
and tasks are generally assigned by HHQ and interpreted by
subordinate commanders. The ability to address complex problems
lies in the commander-driven design effort supported by staff
actions as a basis for developing possible solutions (The
Commander can involve himself as much or as little as he or she
desires).

2. **PROBLEM FRAMING ACTIVITIES**. An essential part of a
Commander's ability to command and control is informing and
being informed. The goal of design is to achieve understanding
gained largely through critical thinking and dialogue.

   a. **Commander's Orientation**

      (1) The commander's orientation demonstrates the
commander's personal involvement in the planning process and
allows him to set the tone for a dialogue.

      (2) Once the commander provides the orientation, the
commander and staff (and perhaps others, e.g., host nation
officials) participate in subsequent discussions/design dialogue
to collectively gain an enhance understanding of the environment
and the nature of the problem.

   b. **Understand the Environment**. Analyzing the environment
helps identify and describe current conditions – this will aid
in developing the problem statement. CMO Planners and Staffs
need to observe their operating environment and then orient to
the best possible advantage to carry out feasible actions.

(1) Activities

    (a) Critical thinking

    (b) Open dialogue / discussion

(2) Consider these broad ranges of factors:

    (a) Existing HHQ Design

    (b) HHQ Mission, Intent, Orders, Directives and Guidance

    (c) Intel Products to include IPB

    (d) Area Studies / Assessments

    (e) ASCOPE analysis

    (f) Key Actors / Relationships

    (g) Population / Culture / Language

    (h) Geography / Demographics

    (i) Climate

(3) Civil Considerations – The CMO Planner has the opportunity to advise the Commander and staff of those key aspects regarding the civil dimension to be considered as the OPT progress in the planning process. These considerations may be physical (terrain), cultural or relational. Civil information may be presented by the Green Cell as well by looking at the ASCOPE/PMESII analysis and providing the following:

    (a) Civil dimension planning factors

    (b) Civil capabilities

    (c) Cultural behavior

    (d) Weather implications

    (e) Civil most likely / most disadvantageous actions

c. **Convene the Green Cell**. The Green Cell is formed to assist the commander and planning group in assessing friendly

planning from the civil perspective. The Green Cell plays a prominent role during the COA development and COA wargame steps, but the cell forms and begins its work during Problem Framing. Depending on the size of the organization, a Green Cell can range in size from an officer with CMO experience to a task-organized group of SMEs including IGOs, NGOs, interagency representatives, political advisors, regional area officers, CA SMEs, or PA and IOs representatives. The Green Cell typically falls under the staff cognizance of the G-9/3 or senior CA officer.

    d. **Understand Yourself**. What does understanding yourself mean? It begins with an internal review of your organization. As the CMO Planner, how many Marines are in the unit? What are their military functions/MOS, Marine Corps experience, CMO experience and so forth? What CA capacity do you really have? Then look across the unit you are supporting. What organic assets might be available to support your CMO efforts? Now look up one level. What does the Detachment have that may be an asset to you? Is there a JAG or a Medical Officer at the Detachment HQ? Continue expanding your view, look at capabilities and the capacity of other military units and interorganizational agencies in the area. In other words:

        (1) Identify staffing levels

        (2) Determine similar capabilities within the MAGTF and identify shortfalls

        (3) Identify plausible solutions for resource shortfalls

   e. **Understand the Problem**. The first step in trying to understand the problem is gathering the facts and information related to the problem. In today's web-based world, there is more information available than time to collect. For Staffs and CMO Planners, time is a limiting factor, often requiring them to draw information from those resources readily available in order to begin piecing/connecting the information.

        (1) To help with piecing together relevant information as timely as possible personal observations, experiences, discussions with others on the staff can be useful. However, leveraging the commander's understanding of the problem will add clarity and focus for the staff and OPT to build a refined vision of the problem. With this refined virtualization of the problem, the commander is prepared to issue initial COA planning guidance.

(2) CMO planners however, should understand and define the problem from the civil perspective. This understanding will allow the CMO planner and the CMO working group to inform the CE OPT's process to ensure that the CE problem incorporates the civil concerns or characteristics. It is imperative that the CMO planner with the support of the CMO working group understands the process and timelines of the CE OPT in order to provide timely input to decision making.

(a) The OPT synthesize their understanding of the nature of the problem into a problem statement. Likewise, the CMO planner synthesizes his understanding of the nature of the problem into a problem statement from the civil perspective and provides input to the OPT. There is no set format for a problem statement.

(b) What should a problem statement address? Starts with, "How to… and may include:

<u>1</u>. Who: The opposing sides – the relationship between competitors or forces.

<u>2</u>. What: The defeat/stability mechanism – the conditions to establish and prevent.

<u>3</u>. When: The time component – the relationship between opponents in time.

<u>4</u>. Where: The center of gravity or decisive point that gives the commander stating the problem a competitive advantage.

<u>5</u>. Example: How to support the Republic of the Gambia's relief effort while minimizing U.S. military presence in the City of Brikama.

f. **<u>Commander's Initial Intent and Guidance</u>**. Having engaged in a design dialog with his planners and staff to gain insight into the problem, the Commander provides his initial intent and guidance to direct continued actions in the planning process.

(1) Commander's Intent is the commander's personal expression of the purpose of the operation. The purpose of the unit's operation is a reflection of understanding the problem to be solved. It must align with HHQ's purpose and be clear, concise and easily understood. It also, Answers the "why, how, and to what extent" questions for the operation (Purpose, Method

(if known) and End state). It may include how the commander
envisions achieving a decision as well as the end state
conditions that, when satisfied, accomplish the purpose.
Commander's Intent helps subordinates understand the larger
context of their actions and guides them in the absence of
orders. The Commander will continue to review and refine his
intent as his understanding evolves.

      (2) The Commander's initial guidance can be detailed or
as broad as the commander desires. There is no prescribed
format for the commander's initial guidance. At a minimum, the
Commander should provide his understanding of the environment
and the nature of the problem. This guidance may also include
his thoughts on the operational environment, friendly and
adversary centers of gravity, information requirements, and his
initial Commander's Intent. Once the commander has provided his
initial guidance, the CMO planner should then provide this
guidance to the CMO working group and articulate his
understanding of the environment and the nature of the problem
from the civil perspective.

     g. **Staff Actions**. Once CMO planners have a better
understanding of the operational environment and have additional
guidance from the OPT, they will conduct a detailed analysis of
tasks, assumptions, limitations, shortfalls, and information
requirements. The staff actions by the OPT and the CMO planner
are complementary activities. When the staff or OPT brief the
Commander, these briefings represent the collective planning
efforts of the command, to include the CMO planning conducted by
the CMO planner.

     h. **Task Analysis**. Armed with an understanding of the
environment, friendly capabilities, the nature of the problem,
the purpose of the operation, and a description of end state or
mission success, CMO planners conduct task analysis from the
civil-military perspective. The learning and understanding that
occur through task analysis help to enhance the understanding of
the problem and contribute to the design effort.

      (1) Commands rarely receive a mission. Normally,
commands receive tasks that planners analyze as a basis for
determining the unit's mission. The principal source for tasks
is the higher headquarters plan or operations order; however
planners may derive tasks from other sources. Using the
Commander's initial guidance and higher headquarters' orders and
annexes, CMO planners identify specified and determine implied
CMO tasks.

(2) Specified Tasks. Planners primarily derive specified tasks from the execution paragraphs of the higher headquarters operation order. However specified tasks may be found elsewhere, such as in the mission statement, coordinating instructions, or annexes (such as Annex D: Logistics and Annex G: Civil-Military Operations). Planners should identify and record any specified task relevant to CMO. The following guidelines will assist CMO planners in forming precise specified tasks:

(a) Identify all specified tasks relevant to CMO.

(b) Record the reference, page and paragraph number where the task was located.

(c) Omit SOP or routine tasks such as "submit daily SITREPS."

(d) Keep track of all tasks (use a spreadsheet).

(e) Example: Conduct key leader engagements within the MAGTF AO.

(3) Implied Tasks. Implied tasks are not specifically stated in the higher headquarters order but are tasks necessary to accomplish specified tasks. Implied tasks emerge from analysis of the higher headquarters order, the threat, and our understanding of the problem. Routine, inherent, enduring or standing operating procedure activities are not implied tasks.

(a) Implied tasks should be linked to a specified task.

(b) Implied tasks should be reviewed to determine necessity, non-routine tasks.

(c) CMO planners should scrub "ALL" specified tasks to identify any CMO implied tasks.

(d) Example: Specified – Support relief operations within the MAGTF AO. Implied – Establish a CMOC within the MAGTF AO.

(4) Essential Tasks. Essential tasks are specified or implied tasks that define mission success and apply to the force as a whole. If a task must be successfully completed for the Commander to accomplish the purpose, it is an essential task.

The Command OPT develops the mission statement from the essential tasks. CMO planners should recommend essential tasks, if applicable, for inclusion into the Mission Statement. CMO planners - do not develop a separate CMO mission statement.

   i. **Assumptions**. Assumptions are suppositions about the current situation or future events. They are assumed to be true in the absence of other facts that would prove the assumption otherwise. Assumptions are used in order to continue planning and allow the commander to make a decision concerning a course of action. They apply to friendly, adversary and environmental considerations. Making an assumption triggers additional staff actions. CMO planners need to validate an assumption prior to the execution of the operation or build into the plan a method to observe the assumption and have a course of action planned when the assumption is validated.

      (1) If the assumption is tied to mission success, the CMO planner needs to recommend that a CCIR be added to the CIM plan to monitor this void in information. The CMO planner should recommend to the OPT Decision Points (DP), Named Areas of Interest (NAI) and other information observations for inclusion into the Common Operating Picture (COP). A valid assumption should answer all of the following:

         (a) Is it logical?

         (b) Is it realistic?

         (c) Is it essential for planning to continue?

         (d) Does it avoid assuming away a threat capability?

         (e) Example: There will be a lack of HN/IGO capacity to support operations.

      (2) CMO planners should determine assumptions from the civil-military perspective. As planning continues, additional CMO-related assumptions may be added and previous CMO-related assumptions may be deleted. A record of all assumptions is maintained in order to track and validate them as they are confirmed or disapproved. Assumptions are contained in operation plans however they are not included in operation orders. If the operation plan contains un-validated assumptions, those assumptions become part of the inherent risks of the operation. When possible, all assumptions are forwarded to higher headquarters for validation. This ensures that HHQ

understands the potential risks that a subordinate command is accepting.

j. **Limitations**. The discourse about planning limitations at this point may be in the form of policies, guidance or ROE. It can be argued that specified tasks are limitations, but specified tasks are not the intended target for this discussion. Restraints (things you cannot do) and constraints (things you must do) that do not qualify as specified tasks are collectively referred to as limitations. Limitations are carried forward into COA Development and subsequent planning as these limitations can affect how operations will be conducted. CMO limitations can be cultural norms that affect how the unit can conduct activities in the environment. Most common is how the force interacts with women or access religious venues.

k. **Identify CMO Resource Shortfalls**. During the initial task analysis CMO planners may identify some apparent shortfalls based on the mission and available resources. CMO planners will need to identify critical resource shortfalls in order to determine additional support requirements. CMO shortfalls may include civilian/local SMEs. Example: the MAGTF is tasked to support agricultural development; there isn't an agricultural expert in the MAGTF. Other resource shortfall considerations:

    (1) Identify shortfalls as early as possible

    (2) Assess throughout planning

        (a) Obtain additional resources

        (b) Adjust plan

    (3) Warfighting Functions filter

    (4) CA Core Tasks

        (a) Population Resource Control

        (b) Foreign Humanitarian Assistance

        (c) Civil Information Management

        (d) Nation Assistance

        (e) Support to Civil Administration

    (5) CA Functional Specialties

(a) Rule of Law

(b) Economic Stability

(c) Infrastructure

(d) Governance

(e) Public Health and Welfare

(f) Public Education and Information

l. **Recommend Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIRs)**. CCIRs are critical pieces of information the commander needs to make a decision; "I need to wake the boss". CCIRs help the staff prioritize information requirements and resource allocation. They should be concise and focused on critical information requirements necessary to aid the Commander in making decisions. Only the Commander decides what information is critical, but the CMO planner/working group should propose Commander's Critical Information Requirements (CCIRs) to the commander via the CMO planner or the senior CA staff officer.

(1) The CCIRs are reviewed and updated as required. Two subcategories of CCIRs are friendly force information requirements (FFIRs) and priority intelligence requirements (PIRs). FFIRs are information requirements that are related to the disposition of friendly forces. PIRs are information requirements related to the adversary and the environment.

(2) Initially, CCIRs may reflect the nature of planning and identify intelligence or information requirements to assist with the planning and decision process.

(3) The staff must consider information collection and resources required. Too many CCIRs may require more assets to collect against them then the unit is willing to allocate. Therefore, careful analysis by the staff when recommending CCIRs is critical.

m. **Identify CMO Requests for Information (RFIs)**. CMO planners identify information necessary to remove assumptions, support future plans or conduct current operations. Based on the CPB and information requirements including CCIRs, the Commander and staff identify gaps in information and intelligence. CMO planners forward requests for information (RFIs) to the appropriate staff section or to higher

headquarters for answers. Over time, the number of RFIs can make the tracking effort very difficult. Most OPTs/HHQ will use a software-based RFI management tool and an individual tasked to track RFI submission and response can help accomplish this task.

3. MISSION STATEMENT. The most important decision coming out of Problem Framing is the mission statement. Now, all of the pieces for a mission statement are available to develop the mission statement narrative.

    a. **The OPT must consider the following the Mission Statement**:

        (1) Combines the analysis of the "What" and "Why"

        (2) Solves the problem

        (3) Addresses: Who, what, when, where and why

    b. **Staff sections do not have their own mission statement**!

    c. **Constructing a Mission Statement**. Constructing a mission statement is the culmination of the work that the OPT has conducted in Problem Framing of the analysis of the purpose and the tasks. The statement needs to address the following:

        (1) What = Essential tasks

        (2) Why = Purpose Statement

        (3) Who = Current unit

        (4) When = Direction from HHQ

        (5) Where = Direction from HHQ

    d. **Draft Mission Statement**. The following is an example of a mission statement: "On order, Division, in partnership with governmental and host nation security forces conducts stability operations to secure the people, to defeat insurgent forces, and to enable security force assumption of security responsibilities within our area of operations in order to support expansion of stability, development and legitimate governance." A technique is to put a definition of the tactical task to provide understanding and intent of the term. This technique will be very useful in later applications of the planning process. For example:

(1) O/O II MEF conducts offensive operations to **defeat** enemy forces in LF Objective 1 IOT restore the Tunisian border.

(2) By defeat we mean: To disrupt or nullify the enemy commander's plan and overcome his will to fight, thus making him unwilling or unable to pursue his adopted course of action and yield to the friendly commander's will.

e. **Initial CMO Staff Estimate**. The CMO planner/working group gathers and refines information during Problem Framing in support of the CMO Staff Estimate. This estimate provides a timely examination of factors that support decision making and can affect mission accomplishment. Depending on the level of command and the time available, the estimate should be a formal, detailed written document. The first part of the staff estimate is completed during problem framing. CMO Planners will update this document throughout the planning process and produce a CA staff estimate. An example can be found in Appendix G of the MCWP 5-1.

4. **PROBLEM FRAMING RESULTS**

a. **Problem Framing Brief**. The OPT presents a Problem Framing Brief to the Commander for review. The brief will include all the Problem Framing products and a recommended mission statement that the Commander will approve. The Problem Framing brief has an intrinsic value far beyond the information presented. Group discussions, when conducted within the proper command climate, can foster a collective level of understanding not attainable by any individual within the group, regardless of experience or seniority. The CMO working group should be prepared to present a Problem Framing brief to the G/S-9's, to answer questions that may arise, and to be able to improve the G/S-9's understanding of the environment prior to briefing the OPT.

b. **Commander's COA Development Guidance**. At the completion of the Problem Framing brief or at some later time, the Commander should provide his guidance for COA Development. This guidance should be a clear and concise expression of what the command intends to accomplish and how available resources will be allocated. Commander's COA Development Guidance may be presented in terms of warfighting functions, lines of operation, and/or forms of maneuver. Most importantly, COA Development guidance should include the Commander's vision of the DECISIVE action. This visualization assists the staff in determining the

battlespace framework to include the main effort. Other
guidance topics the Commander may address include:

       (1) Type of operation

       (2) Forms of maneuver

       (3) Timing

       (4) Command relationships

       (5) Task organization

       (6) Phasing

       (7) Risk

   c. **Draft the Warning Order**. With an approved mission,
Commander's intent, and the planning Guidance the OPT should
draft a warning order to subordinate units. This warning order
allows the MSEs to complete their Problem Framing. CMO planners
provide input to the warning order to include information on the
civil component, CMO CCIRs, and CMO assumptions.

   d. **Results of Problem Framing**. Problem Framing produces
results that drive subsequent steps of the planning process.
Required results from Problem Framing are:

       (1) Approved Mission Statement

       (2) Approved Commander's Intent

       (3) Commander's Planning Guidance

       (4) Warning Order

REFERENCES:

Marine Corps Planning Process, MCWP 5-1
MAGTF Civil-Military Operations, MCWP 3-33.1

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